

ADDRESS OF THE EVANGELIST TO HIS READERS

COMMONLY CALLED

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE

JOHN

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.—I have appended "The First Epistle of John" to his Gospel, as it is evidently the concluding section of the same, and forms a perfect summary of the essentials of the Gospel Message. It would seem to have been added to the Ephesian edition of the Gospel by the Evangelist about A.D. 90, and not issued with the Jerusalem edition written shortly after the Crucifixion. This section forms an address from the writer to his readers, from which it is clearly seen why he merely recorded a few of the conversations of his Master, instead of writing an exhaustive history of His life.—F. F.

1 **H**E was from the beginning--

Whom we have heard; Whom we have seen with our eyes; Whom we have contemplated; and our hands have felt, accompanying the LIVING

2 **WORD**: for the **LIFE** was manifested; and we have seen Him and have given evidence, and proclaim to you the **LIFE** Who was eternal, Who

existed with the Father, and was

3 manifested to us—What we have seen and heard, we also declare to you, in order that you might be participators with ourselves; yes, and our union is with the Father, and with His Son

4 **Jesus Christ**. And we have written this, in order that your delight might be complete.

5 This, moreover, is the announcement which we have learned from Him, and convey to you: namely, that **GOD IS LIGHT**, and darkness in Him

6 there is none. If we say that we are in union with Him, and still follow the darkness, we are false, and act

7 not up to the Truth. But if, on the other hand, we follow the Light (as He Himself is in the light), we are in union with each other; and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us

8 from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the

9 Truth is foreign to us. If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just although he should take away our sins, and purify us from all our unrighteousness. If we deny that we have

10 committed sin, we make Him false, and we do not grasp His doctrine.

2 My little children, I write this to you, in order that you may not sin. And if any one should sin, we have

an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And He is an offering for our sins; and not for ours alone, but also for all the world. 3

And by this we recognise that we know Him, if we observe His commands. Whoever says, "I know 4

Him," and fails to observe His commands, is a liar, and the Truth is not 5

in him. But whoever observes His message, the love of God is undoubtedly perfected in him. By this we

recognise that we are in Him. Who- 6
ever says that he remains in Him, ought to conduct himself in the same way as He conducted Himself.

Dear friends, I write to you no new 7
command; but on the contrary, an old command, the same which you

possessed from the beginning. The old command is the message which you learned. Again, I write you a 8

new command, which is true in itself and also in you; because the darkness is clearing away, and the true

Light already shines. Whoever, 9
therefore, says he is in the Light, yet hates his brother, is even until now

in the darkness. Whoever loves 10
his brother, dwells in the Light; and there is no stumbling-block in 11

him. Whoever hates his brother, however, is in the darkness; he walks in the dark, and knows not where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

I write to you, little children, be- 12
cause your sins are expelled through His Name. I write to you, fathers, 13

because you have known Him from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have conquered the

- Wicked One. I have written to you, youths, because you know the Father.
- 14 I have written to you, fathers, because you have recognised Him from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong; and the message of God rests in you, and you have conquered the Wicked
- 15 One. Cherish neither the world, nor yet what is in the world. If any one cherishes the world, the affection of
- 16 the Father is not in him; because all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—are not from the Father,
- 17 but they are from the world. The world passes away, and its lusts; but he who works out the purpose of God continues for ever.
- 18 Youths, it is the last period; and, as you have learned that Antichrist would come—and already many antichrists have come—we consequently
- 19 know that it is the last period. They went out from among us, but they did not belong to us; because if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. They left, however, in order that it might be evident that
- 20 they were not connected with us. But you hold a sacred appointment from
- 21 the Holy One. You know all. I have not written to you because you are ignorant of the truth; but because you do know it, and because nothing false can proceed from the truth.
- 22 Who is the liar, if not the one who denies that Jesus is the Messiah? He is the antagonist of Christ who denies
- 23 the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son, never has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son, possesses
- 24 the Father also. You, continue in what you learned from the beginning. If what you learned from the first remains with you, you will continue in union with the Son, and in union with the
- 25 Father. And this is the promise which He promised to us, the Life Eternal.
- 26 I have written this to you on account of those who would mislead
- 27 you. And as for you, the sacred appointment which you received from Him, retain it with you; and then you will require no other teacher; but this, His consecration, will teach you about everything; and it is truthful, and not false: and as He has taught you, hold on to Him.
- 28 And now, little children, abide in Him; so that at His appearance we may enjoy perfect freedom, and not feel

ashamed about Him in His presence. If you know that He is righteous, 29 you will also recognise that every one who acts righteously is born of Him.

Just think what a wealth of love the 3 Father has lavished upon us, in order that we might be called children of God: and such we are! For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Friends, we are now children of God; and it is 2 not yet revealed what we shall become. But we do know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him; because we shall see Him as He actually is. And every one who 3 has this hope in Him will purify himself, as He is pure. Every one who 4 commits sin acts lawlessly, for sin is broken law. You know also that He 5 was manifested to remove sins; and He is sinless. All who continue 6 with Him will not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

Dear children, let none deceive you. 7 Whoever practises righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. Whoever practises sin is from the 8 Devil; for the Devil sinned from the first.

This was the purpose for which the Son of God was manifested, namely, that He might destroy the works of the Devil. Every one born 9 from God does not practise sin; because His principle of life continues in him: and he does not value sinning, because he has been born from God. By means of this the children of God 10 are manifest, as well as the children of the Devil. Whoever does not practise righteousness is not from God; nor yet is he who does not love his brother. Because this is the doctrine which you 11 learned from the first, that we should love one another; not being impelled 12 by the Wicked One, as Cain was, who murdered his brother. And on account of what did he murder him? Because his own practices were wicked, and those of his brother righteous.

Do not, brothers, be surprised if the 13 world hates you. We know that we 14 are transplanted out of death into life, when we love the brotherhood. Whoever does not love remains in death. Whoever hates his brother is 15 a murderer, and you know that no murderer ever has eternal life existing

16 in him. His love is known to us from the fact that He laid down His own life for our sakes; so we ought also to lay down our lives for the sake of our
 17 brothers. But whoever possesses the means of livelihood in this world, and sees his brother in want, yet locks up his pity from him, how can the love of
 18 God dwell in him? Children, let us not love in pretence, nor with the tongue; but in act and truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth, and may tranquillize our heart in His
 20 presence; and our mind can discover that God is greater than our heart; when all will be clear. Friends, even if our heart should not discover it,
 22 we have free approach to God; and what we may ask we shall receive from Him, when we regard His commands, and practise those virtues in
 23 His sight. This also is His command, that we should believe in the Name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as earnestly as He gave us an
 24 instruction. And the observer of His commands remains in Him, and He in him. And by this we recognise that He dwells in us, by the Spirit with which He has endowed us.

4 Friends, do not believe every thinker; but test the teachings, whether they emanate from God: because many false teachers have gone out into the
 2 world. By this you can recognise the teacher from God: every teacher acknowledging that Jesus Christ came
 3 bodily is from God; and every teacher who does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This, then, is the test of the antagonist of Christ, whose coming you have heard of; and
 4 now he is already in the world. You, children, are from God, and have defeated them; because the One Who is with you is mightier than the one who is in the world.

5 They belong to the world; their conversation is therefore worldly, and
 6 the world listens to them. We are from God: whoever recognises God, listens to us; whoever does not proceed from God, regards us not. By this we can discern the spirit of Truth, as well as the spirit of Error.

7 Let us love one another, friends, because love is from God; and every one who loves is born from God, and
 8 knows God. He who does not love, does not know God; for GOD IS
 9 LOVE. The love of God was displayed

in our own case, when God sent His only-begotten Son to the world, so that we might live by means of Him. Here was the love; not that we loved
 10 God, but that He loved us, and sent His own Son as a reconciliation for our sins. Friends, if God loved us so
 11 much, we ought also to love one another. No one has at any time
 12 seen God. If we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we recognise that we
 13 dwell in Him, and He in us, because He has endowed us with His own Spirit. And we have also seen, and
 14 are giving evidence, that the Father has sent the Son a Saviour of the world. Whoever shall acknowledge
 15 that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him, and he in God. And
 16 we realise and rely upon the love which God has for us.

GOD IS LOVE; and whoever continues in love, dwells in God, and God in him. His love with us will be
 17 perfected when we have free access in the Day of Judgment; because as He Himself is, we also shall be, in that world. There is no fear in love. But
 18 perfect love expels fear, because fear is torture; and whoever is in fear has not reached the perfection of love. We love, because He first loved
 19 us. If any one says, "I love God,"
 20 yet hates his brother, he is a liar; because whoever does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God Whom he has not seen. This command, moreover, we have
 21 received from Him—that the lover of God should also love his own brother.

Every one who believes that Jesus 5 is the Messiah is born from God; and every one loving the Father should love His offspring. We know that we
 2 love the children of God, when we love God, and practise His commands.

For this is the love of God, that we 3 should keep His commands; and His commands are not burdensome. Be-
 4 cause every one born from God conquers the world; and this is the conquest which has conquered the world—our faith. Who is the conqueror of
 5 the world, if not the believer that Jesus is the Son of God?

That is Jesus the Messiah, Who 6 came through water and blood; not in the water only, but in the Water, and in the Blood; and the Spirit is the Witness that Spirit Who is

7 the Truth—that there are three
 8 who give evidence—the Spirit, and the
 Human Nature and the Earthly Life;
 9 and these three were in that One.¹ If
 we accept the evidence of men, the
 evidence of God is stronger; and
 this is the evidence of God which He
 10 adduced concerning His Son. The
 believer in the Son of God possesses
 the evidence in himself. Whoever
 disbelieves Him represents Him to
 be a liar; because he relies not
 upon the evidence which God has
 11 adduced concerning His Son. And
 this is the evidence—that God has
 granted to us eternal life; and the
 12 same life that exists in His Son. The
 possessor of the Son possesses that
 life; whoever does not possess the
 Son of God does not possess that life.
 13 These facts I have written to you,
 in order that you may recognise that
 you are the possessors of everlasting
 life, and that you may believe upon
 14 the Name of the Son of God. And
 this is the privilege which we possess
 towards Him, that if we ask for any-

thing in accordance with His inten-
 tion, He listens to us; and if we are 15
 assured that He hears us, whatever we
 may be asking, we know that we shall
 have the requests that we ask from Him.

If any one sees his brother sinning 16
 a sin, if not a deadly one, should he
 ask, then He must grant him life for
 those not sinning mortally. There is
 mortal sin; I do not say that he
 should supplicate about it. All in- 17
 justice is sin; and there is sin not
 mortal.

We know that whoever is born from 18
 God, will not sin; on the contrary,
 he who is born from God guards him-
 self, and the Wicked One does not
 touch him. We know that we are 19
 from God; but the whole world trusts
 in the Wicked One. We know also 20
 that the Son of God has come, and
 has endowed us with intellect, so that
 we can recognise the True; and we
 are in that Truth, with His Son
 Jesus, the Messiah. This is Divine
 Truth and Eternal Life. Dear chil- 21
 dren, guard yourselves from idolatry.

EDITORIAL NOTE ON ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.—Long and careful study of St. John's Gospel has convinced me that we have in it a translation of an original Hebrew work of the Apostle into Greek, by the Evangelist himself, or under his own eye, in his old age, for use by his Greek converts, after the destruction of Jerusalem. To this he clearly has added commentarial notes incorporated by transcribers with the text, and these have led some to imagine it the last instead of the first Gospel.—I have put these comments into brackets [—] in this edition at the desire of several readers.—F.F.

NOTE ON VERSES 5 TO 8.—This rendering is that of the Evangelist's thought in his native Hebrew idiom, as if we put the words back to Hebrew can be seen according to the use of the word **וְ** in Moses and elsewhere.—F.F.

The Woman taken in Adultery.¹

(JOHN vii. 53; viii. 1—11.)

The narrative of the sinful woman (chap. vii. 53 to chap. viii. 11) is rejected by the most competent authorities as a spurious interpolation. The question will be found fully discussed in the introduction to the larger edition of *Westcott and Hort's Greek New Testament* (page 299, section 388); and it is given as their opinion that this particular passage "has no right to a place in the Text of the Four Gospels." The language of the MSS. containing the passage varies considerably; but the generally accepted reading I have added here at the end of St. John's Gospel, where it is placed as an appendix for reference.—F.F.

53 [Every one then went to his own home.

8 Jesus, however, went to the Mount of Olivet. And in the early morning He returned again to the temple, and all the people came up to Him; and 2 sitting down, He taught them. The professors and Pharisees then brought forward a woman discovered committing adultery; and placing her in the centre, they addressed Him:

4 "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the very act of committing 5 adultery. Now Moses, in the law, ordered us to stone such as her; what, then, do You say about her?"

6 They said this, however, for the purpose of entrapping Him, in order that they might lay an information against Him. Jesus, however, stooped down, and wrote upon the ground with

His finger. But as they continued to 7 question Him, He raised Himself, and said to them: "Whoever among you is without sin, let him throw at her the first stone."

And again stooping down, He wrote 8 upon the ground with His finger. And 9 His hearers, being conscience-stricken, crept out one by one, beginning from the oldest down to the youngest; Jesus being left alone, and the woman standing where she was in the centre. Jesus then raising Himself, and seeing 10 none but the woman, He said to her:

"Why, woman, where are your accusers? Has no one passed sentence upon you?"

"None, Sir," was her reply. 11

"Neither do I pass sentence upon you," said Jesus; "go, from this moment sin no more."]

¹ See chapter vii. 52.